



Monitoring Historic Trails

Oregon-California Trails Association
Preservation Training Program
2005-2008

Trail Monitoring Activities

- Act as liaison between OCTA and land managers/owners/developers
- Organize and oversee OCTA activities along a selected trail or trail segment
- Increase public awareness of the trail and enlist public support for its protection





Common Pitfalls for Trail Liaisons

- Initiate Section 106 process
- Identify historic properties
- Assess effects
- Resolve adverse effects
- **OCTA never consulted**
- **Trails are unidentified, misidentified, incorrectly evaluated**
- **“No effect” decision made incorrectly**
- **Mitigation inadequate**

Make Trail Decisions by Consensus

- Are you comfortable with the level of input you are giving?
- Formal communication letters must be written by chapter Preservation Officer or President
- Formal agreements or approvals must be made by national Preservation Officer

Field Monitoring Activities

- Mapping trails
- Trail Maintenance
- Photo-monitoring

Photo-Monitoring

- Keep a photographic record of threatened or changing trail areas/features.
- Always take each photograph from the same location, facing the same direction, identical to previous photos.
- Photograph each location annually.









Monitoring Organization at Chapter Level

- Trail Stewards – requires least amount of time/commitment from chapter members.
- Trail Monitors – requires annual or bi-annual trail visit, photo-monitoring and/or mapping and/or consultation at some level.
- Trail “Boss” or Manager – level of time/commitment varies depending on length and existing management conditions of selected trail segments.

Trail Stewards

- Works best for members who live or vacation in proximity to a known trail or trail segment.
- Steward should familiarize him/her self with selected trail/segment by procuring maps with OCTA classifications and hiking/visiting it with the original mapper or expert who can point out features, threats, etc.
- Depending on need (ie., quantity and intensity of threats), steward should visit trail/segment semiannually or annually and make note of any alterations, natural or artificial, since time of last visit.
- Investigate the source of any damage or threat to the trail that has occurred recently or may be in progress (eg., logging, underground line installation, vandalism or excessive littering). Report all collected information to Chapter President or Preservation Officer.
- Assist trail manager and chapter officers if/when action is taken over damage or threats, and continue monitoring the trail/segment.

Trail Monitors

- Requires a GPS for taking/relocating UTM points and a 35mm regular or digital camera.
- Monitor follows the basic process outlined for a trail Steward, but also implements a recurring photo-monitoring program on an annual or biannual basis along their trail/segment. Adequate program for each trail/segment must be developed in conjunction with the trail boss/manager and/or chapter Preservation Officer.
- Monitor will follow OCTA photo-monitoring guidelines to ensure that program is completed in a standard manner and is consistent with other programs on other trails.
- Monitor will report all significant results of photo-monitoring to trail boss (if there is one), or Chapter Preservation Officer or President.
- When monitor is ready to pass their program to someone else they will turn in all the photos and records in good order to the Chapter for reassignment.

Trail “Boss” or Manager

- Works best for members who are already very knowledgeable about the trail/segment they wish to manage or are rapidly becoming an “expert” on its history, physical evidence, and historic integrity.
- Trail boss essentially assumes responsibility within OCTA for the protection of their selected trail/segment.
- Trail boss is familiar with owners and/or land managers along their trail, and serves as liaison between them and OCTA in preservation matters. This task requires basic knowledge of cultural resources management (eg., Section 106, NEPA, and applicable local laws) as practiced by government land managers.
- Trail boss oversees or has input to ALL mapping, monitoring, and marking activities taking place along his/her trail/trail segment.
- Trail boss develops treatment plan for trail/segment management, requests and assigns stewards and monitors from OCTA, and organizes trail maintenance/restoration events as needed.
- Trail boss shares map data and historical knowledge of their trail/segment appropriately, and guides or educates other members interested in trail management.

Happy Trail Monitoring!

